



State Board of Equalization

# News Release

**Vice Chair Michelle Steel**

**3<sup>rd</sup> District – Rolling Hills Estates**

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## **Michelle Steel Announces Annual Taxpayers' Bill of Rights Hearings in Sacramento on September 20, 2011**

Michelle Steel, Vice Chair of the California State Board of Equalization (BOE), today announced that the annual Taxpayers' Bill of Rights hearings will be held Tuesday, September 20, 2011 at the BOE headquarters building in Sacramento. The annual Taxpayers' Bill of Rights hearings provide a forum for business and property taxpayers to present ideas for improving the administration of tax programs at the BOE.

"It is a fundamental right of taxpayers to have their views and concerns heard by the government," said Steel. "These hearings will enable California taxpayers to come before the Board with comments on issues related to the business and property taxes laws administered or overseen by the BOE, including environmental fees, sales and use, fuel, excise, and property taxes."

Each year the elected Board Members of the California State Board of Equalization hold public hearings in Sacramento and Culver City. Taxpayers are encouraged to share their ideas and concerns related to the administration and oversight of business taxes and property taxes at the BOE. In addition to safeguarding the rights, privacy, and property of taxpayers, Board Members are interested in discussing ways they can help taxpayers better understand California's state tax laws.

**What:** Property and Business Taxpayers' Bill of Rights Hearing  
**When:** Tuesday, September 20, 2011  
Approximately 1:30 P.M.  
**Where:** State Board of Equalization Headquarters Building  
450 N Street, Room 121  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Taxpayers' Bill of Rights Hearings in Sacramento will be webcast live at [www.boe.ca.gov](http://www.boe.ca.gov). Taxpayers interested in making a presentation at the Taxpayers' Bill of Rights Hearings are invited to contact the BOE Taxpayers' Rights Advocate Office by calling 888-324-2798, or by email at [www.boe.ca.gov/info/emailtra.htm](mailto:www.boe.ca.gov/info/emailtra.htm). More information about the annual hearings is available online at [www.boe.ca.gov/meetings/heartra.htm](http://www.boe.ca.gov/meetings/heartra.htm). The Taxpayers' Bill of Rights Hearings in Culver City were held on June 21, 2011.

Enacted in January 1989, the Harris-Katz California Taxpayers' Bill of Rights Law requires that the BOE ensure that the rights of California taxpayers are protected during the assessment and collection of sales and use taxes. The Taxpayers' Bill of Rights was expanded in 1993 to include special tax programs such as excise, fuel, and alcohol taxes, and the Morgan Property Taxpayers' Bill of Rights was added in 1994. The BOE is required by law to conduct public Bill of Rights hearings annually.

Elected to the Board of Equalization in 2006 and re-elected in 2010, Michelle Steel serves as *Southern California's elected taxpayer advocate*. In December 2007, Steel discovered the Board of Equalization had delayed the return of

millions of dollars in security deposits owed to California businesses. Procedures were changed due to Steel's decisive leadership. Following her investigation, the tax agency refunded tax security deposits to over 5,500 small businesses. To date, over \$100 million in security deposits have been returned to taxpayers.

The five-member California State Board of Equalization is a publicly elected tax board. The Board of Equalization collects more than \$50 billion annually in taxes and fees supporting state and local government services. It hears business tax appeals, acts as the appellate body for franchise and personal income tax appeals, and serves a significant role in the assessment and administration of property taxes. For more information on other taxes and fees in California, visit [www.taxes.ca.gov](http://www.taxes.ca.gov).

Taxpayers' Rights Advocate Office: [www.boe.ca.gov/tra/tra.htm](http://www.boe.ca.gov/tra/tra.htm)

Taxpayers' Rights Advocate's 2009/10 Annual Report: [www.boe.ca.gov/tra/tra0910.pdf](http://www.boe.ca.gov/tra/tra0910.pdf)

Publication 70, *Understanding Your Rights as a California Taxpayer*: [www.boe.ca.gov/pdf/pub70.pdf](http://www.boe.ca.gov/pdf/pub70.pdf)

Taxes and Fees Administered by the California Board of Equalization, 2009-10: [www.boe.ca.gov/pdf/pub41.pdf](http://www.boe.ca.gov/pdf/pub41.pdf)

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